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matter is such, however, that the book is better suited for consecutive study as a whole than for occasional reference to special passages. For the latter purpose the indices will be found serviceable; yet one will wish to consult the running commentary of Burnet.

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T. Livi Periochae Omnium Librorum, Fragmenta Oxyrhynchi Reperta, Julii Obsequentis Prodigiorum Liber. Edidit OTTO ROSSBACH. Adiecta est Tabula Phototypica. Leipzig: Teubner, 1910. Pp. 210. M. 2.80.

This new critical edition of the three epitomes of Livy is a welcome addition to the Teubner Library. The text is on the whole well printed, though marred here and there by typographical errors which will doubtless be corrected in a second edition. An unusually full apparatus appears at the foot of each page; the volume contains an indispensable index of proper names, and a facsimile of a page of the Oxyrhynchus fragment. The only criticism to be offered, so far as the text is concerned, is that the portion containing the Oxyrhynchus fragment, though well equipped with a full critical apparatus, will be of little use, even to the scholar, without a commentary such as that given in Kornemann's edition of 1904. Owing to the large number of mutilated lines, the problems of the critic are not simply paleographical, but historical, and the lacunae must be filled out largely from evidence contained in the other epitomes, in the text of Livy himself for the portions where Livy is extant, and other sporadic historical data. Without such a commentary there is no way of testing the probability of the many conjectures.

In his introduction Rossbach has dealt with the many problems involved in the Periochae, and particularly in the Fragmentum Oxyrhynchi, but often in a way that is disappointingly vague. For instance, he discusses his contention (in the *Berl. Phil. Woch.*, 1904) that the Oxyrhynchus Fragment was by the same author as *Periocha 1 a*, and Kornemann's arguments to the contrary, but leaves the reader completely in the dark as to his present view upon the subject. In the same way also, after stating that the Oxyrhynchus Fragment shows linguistic evidence of descent from an epitome which antedates the time of Claudius, he goes on to state that the *Periochae*, in their original form, belong to about the same time (i.e., the pre-Claudian era), but the linguistic evidence which he cites without further comment ranges from Seneca to Suetonius. Particularly maddening is a paragraph on p. xxiii, beginning: "Ceterum quisquis est fuit, qui periochas composit et nomen suum consulto uidetur tacuisse, etiam praeter res gestas memorabilia quaedam nos docet" (sic). The *memorabilia* which he cites here, so far as

I can see, after reading the passage over several times, have nothing to do with the *Periochae* at all, but with Livy only.

For many of these problems definite solutions are not possible and are not expected; but this is all the more reason for a clear statement of the questions at issue and for some hint as to the author's attitude.

F. W. SHIPLEY

Geburt, Hochzeit und Tod: Beiträge zur vergleichenden Volkskunde.

Von ERNST SAMTER. Leipzig und Berlin: Teubner, 1911.

Pp. 222. Mit 7 Abbildungen im Text und auf 3 Tafeln. M. 6.

This book represents the extension of Dr. Samter's earlier studies in ancient customs, such as his *Familienfeste der Griechen und Römer* (1901), *Antiker und moderner Volksbrauch* (1903), and *Hochzeitsbräuche* (1907). The dedication to Hermann Diels, under whose instruction in Greek religion the author sat twenty-five years ago, and the author's apology for employing the term Comparative Folklore indicate both the inspiration of the work and the newness of the science of which it treats.

The title covers somewhat more than the book itself embraces. Not all the ancient rites practiced at birth, marriage, and death are discussed, but rather such rites as were common to two or three of these events, a more extended treatment of customs at death being reserved for later publication.

Dr. Samter seems to have been successful in his endeavor to trace to their principal source many customs which, because of their antiquity and reinterpretation, have become enigmas to the folklorist. Such are the laying of persons upon the ground at birth and when dying; the precautions taken in behalf of as well as against the mother at childbirth; the use of weapons, torches, and candles at birth, marriage, and death; the rites of fire and water; the exchange of garments; the false bride; nakedness; the untying of knots, the rending of garments, and the unloosing of the hair; the prohibition of sleep to mother and child at the birth of the latter, to bride and bridegroom at marriage, and to the inmates of a house when death has occurred in their midst; the veiling of the mirror; the precautions against treading on the threshold; the prohibition against looking back; the use of salt; the interruption of the marriage procession; the use of blood and the color red in ceremonials; the offering of shoes at marriage and at death. These among others are the customs which Dr. Samter has singled out for extended discussion and whose origin he finds in the fear of spirits and the desire of man to placate or avert them. These spirits he believes to be in part the souls of the long-departed dead, and, in the case of funeral rites, the soul of the recently deceased also. The closing chapter of the book is devoted to evidences of ancestor worship at birth and at marriage.

Dr. Samter employs the comparative method in his investigations.